

Guilford Meals on Wheels celebrates its 20th Anniversary! Thank you to those who have volunteered over the years!



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Veterans

It is critically important that we recognize the sacrifices the men and women in our armed forces and their families have made for us. In honor of their commitment, we crafted the following initiatives:

- Mobilization awards for members of the Connecticut National Guard
- Tuition for military personnel stationed in Connecticut
- Families of soldiers that sacrifice their lives will now receive up to \$100,000
- State income tax exemption for military pensions
- New military relief fund for families
- Monthly National Guard bonus for active duty
- New testing program for depleted uranium exposure



United We Stand

Teenage Drivers

In an effort to tighten graduated licensing laws and reduce motor vehicle crashes involving younger drivers, the legislature has enacted new restrictions on 16 and 17-year-old drivers. Beginning October 1st, 16 and 17-year-olds will be banned from driving between the hours of 12:01 AM and 5:00 AM. Exceptions to the ban include driving related to school, work, religious activity, or emergency situations. The new law also increases the number of behind-the-wheel, on-the-road hours required to obtain a drivers license from eight hours to twenty hours. Teenage drivers are also banned completely from using hand-held or hands-free cell phones while driving.

Questions about Medicare Part D prescription drug plan? Contact
CHOICES hotline 1-800-994-9422 or Connecticut Infoline 2-1-1



STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATRICIA WIDLITZ ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

Capitol News 2003

98TH DISTRICT • GUILFORD & BRANFORD

Dear Friends,

This year's legislative session proved to be both challenging and productive. We took the time to focus on the future of our children by ensuring increased funding in education for our cities and towns. This will not only help improve educational opportunities throughout the state, but will also help provide local property tax relief. Significant investments were also made in School Readiness and Higher Education, reflecting the importance of maintaining our state as one of the best educated in the nation.

At our insistence, HUSKY health insurance for the working poor was saved from the chopping block, ensuring healthcare coverage for thousands of children and their families. We provided funding for residential support for 150 individuals on the DMR waiting list, a critical issue for many of our families.

As we approach the season of Thanksgiving, we are on an emotional rollercoaster as we celebrate our successful effort to save our Sub Base, but we are heartbroken at the suffering Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have brought to our southern neighbors.

I am so proud of the outpouring of assistance from the people of our state and especially of our shoreline towns. It is truly an honor to represent you in Hartford!

Sincerely,

Pat Widlitz

A Transportation Victory!



Pat with Rep. Panaroni, Rep. Heinrich, and Sen. Meyer. The Shoreline legislators worked hard to secure funding for transportation initiatives.

Finally, we have begun a long-term transportation strategy with appropriate funding mechanisms in place. The current transportation crisis is more than an inconvenience, it impedes the movement of people and goods, negatively impacting business and economic development.

With the passage of this \$1.3 billion transportation initiative, we will add at least 340 new rail cars to Metro-North, construct a long overdue maintenance facility, make \$187 million in interstate highway improvements and \$150 million in improvements to other roads, and spend \$7.5 million for new buses. The good news is there was bipartisan support for the proposal, and it was readily apparent this year that it was time to take action.

Hurricane Relief

Donate or volunteer to:

American Red Cross
1-800-HELP NOW (435-7669)
www.redcross.org

America's Second Harvest
1-800-344-8070

Salvation Army
1-800-SAL-ARMY (725-2769)
www.salvationarmyusa.org

CT Food Bank
1-203-469-5000 ext 303
www.ctfoodbank.org

AmeriCares
1-800-486-4357
www.americares.org

ASPCA (www.aspc.org)

Representative Patricia Widlitz: Proven Leadership

Public Health

Stem Cell Research



Rep Widlitz addressed a rally at the Capitol sponsored by Hadassah in support of stem cell research.

Mount Sinai Medical School in New York City, which included a tour of their laboratory. (PA 05-149)

As a member of the Public Health Committee, I co-sponsored landmark legislation to provide a ten year, \$100 million funding commitment to establish Connecticut as a stem cell research center. This research holds great promise for finding cures for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Juvenile Diabetes and other diseases. I had the amazing experience of meeting with Dr. Keller and Dr. Woo, top stem cell researchers at

Breast Cancer Screening



Pat met with constituents Nancy Matthews and Mary Wallace during their visit to the Capitol as Community Ambassadors for the American Cancer Society.

Insurers will now be required to cover ultrasound screening for breast cancer if a physician recommends it. This screening is better able to detect breast cancer in the earliest stages and is more reliable. Early detection of breast cancer can decrease the chances of cancer spreading to other parts of the body and increase the chances for complete recovery. (PA 05-69)

Pesticides at Day Care Facilities



Pat speaking during Plant Science Day at Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

pesticides and insecticides. The legislation makes exceptions to the prohibition on the application of pesticides in instances in which they are necessary to eliminate an immediate threat to human health. (PA 05-252)

Significant action was taken by state lawmakers to protect children's health, by restricting the use of lawn care pesticides at public and private pre-schools, elementary schools, child day care centers, and group day care homes. The vulnerable developing organs and nervous systems of children can be put at serious risk from unnecessary exposure to the chemical substances found in pesticides and insecticides. The legislation makes exceptions to the prohibition on the application of pesticides in instances in which they are necessary to eliminate an immediate threat to human health. (PA 05-252)

Fighting for the Sound!



Rep. Widlitz announced her legislative proposal for a bi-state Long Island Sound Committee.

Protecting the rich and natural resources of Long Island Sound continues to be one of my top priorities! Now, more than ever, there is rising concern over the impact of the proposed industrialization, floating terminal and private use of the Sound, including Broadwater's LNG proposal. A newly established bi-state committee, composed of members from Connecticut and New York, will be charged with avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the impact on the natural resources and water quality of the Sound. (PA 05-137). The House Majority Leader has recently appointed me to serve on this bi-state Long Island Sound Committee. I eagerly accept the honor and challenge of this appointment.



Environment Protection Commissioner Gina McCarthy (above) and Governor Rell recently came to Stony Creek to announce Long Island Sound license plate grants.

I took advantage of this opportunity to point out the proposed location of the islander east pipeline and accompanied Commissioner McCarthy on a tour of the Thimble Islands aboard the **Sea Mist**. The new DEP Commissioner was impressed with the natural beauty of the area. Subsequently, in a television interview, she commented on the beauty of the "Thimbles" and claimed Long Island Sound as her top environmental priority!

Consumer Protection

Solar Licensing

I worked with Guilford resident, **Everett Barber**, and the staff at the Department of Consumer Protection to expand the licensure requirements for certain persons who engage in solar work. As the demand for renewable energy increases, this legislation will ensure that qualified people install solar systems. For information on financial incentives for solar installations, see www.solarconnecticut.org.



Everett Barber and Rep. Widlitz were present when Governor Rell signed their bill.

Preservation and Protection

Connecticut has lost 12% of its farmland between 1997 and 2002, a higher percentage than any other state. I co-sponsored legislation creating a fund for farmland preservation, open space acquisition, historic preservation and affordable housing. Based on a new \$30 document recording fee, the fund is expected to generate about \$27 million a year. Town clerks will keep \$3 per document for local capital improvement projects.



Identity Theft

Effective January 1, 2006, consumer credit bureaus must freeze credit reports to combat fraud and identity theft on your request. This bill: requires all freezes to be implemented within five days of a consumer's request; clarifies the means by which a consumer can temporarily remove a freeze; mandates businesses to inform affected consumers, if there has been a security breach involving their computerized personal information. (PA 05-148)

For more info call me at 800-842-1902 or e-mail me at Patricia.Widlitz@cga.ct.gov